Achieving Sustainable Development Goals: An Analytical Overview of Indian Experience (2000–2019)

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INTRODUCTION[1]

Sustainable development demands the peoples' participation. Ever since a resolution to achieve Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), 2000 is drawn, both the developing nations and the developed nations continued to strive hard to achieve them. In the process, both the UNICEF and the World Bank have envisaged a wider role for the media and communication as a connecting agent or tool among various sections of the society of any country. Political processes are communication processes and result—not only through formal elections but also through an ongoing dialogue—between people and their government and through the shaping of public agendas (At the Heart of Change: The Role of Communication in Sustainable Development., 2007, pp. 3–5).

India has been a signatory to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) enunciated in 2000 and continued to be a partner in achieving the targets of

[1] The State of Andhra Pradesh, with 490 million people as per latest census report 2011, is the eighth largest State in India. It is now called the residual State. The State was last divided into Telangana and Andhra through an enactment of a law in Indian Parliament in March 2013. Earlier it was a combined State and was the fifth largest State in India.

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integrated Sustainable Development Goals (17 iSDGs). While MDGs have comprised broad 8 goals with 21 targets that all nations must achieve by 2015, the 17 iSDGs have become the extension of MDGs with 169 more specific targets to ensure the development goals of MDGs more inclusive. In other words, MDGs are now more ramified in terms of goals and specific targets to achieve.

This chapter dwells upon various socio-economic and energy-based reforms conceived through different welfare measures (e.g. *Garibi hatao*, nationalization of banks, abolition of privy purses, Clean and Green, *Arogya Sri*, *Anna* Canteens, *Chandranna Bheema*, *Gareeb Kalyan*, *Swachh Bharat, Amrit*, etc.) that have begun to creep in to the Indian society in a phased manner both before the ushering in of the MDGs and later within the framework of the MDGs since 2000 (nearly two decades back). Today these welfare measures, highly 'populist' though, are continuing as part of 17 iSDGs aimed to achieve sustainable development (Melokte & Steeves, 2013).

Sustainable development can be defined as a society 'competing for the available resources without exhausting them for future generations' (United Nations Report, 1987). It offers immense opportunities for people to access more information and knowledge, which they use to improve their lives. However, it must be borne in mind that without an operation of a communication paradigm, or a theory, there is no possibility of achieving a 'sustainable development' in any society of any country or any part of the world. Communication paradigm or theory and development issues are mutually and inclusively dependent on each other. In this regard the author wishes to outline some of the concerns that problematize the adoption of a particular communication theory or paradigm for achieving sustainable development in highly culturally diverse Indian contexts.

Accordingly, the chapter discusses first the issues such as problematizing role of communication and sustainable development in terms of its holistic ability to address multilateral issues, real freedoms of a developing society, and how a development is variously interpreted as sustainable in terms of modernization. Further, the chapter reviews in brief some welfare schemes innovatively formulated by both the State of Andhra Pradesh and Central Government of India for achieving a sustainable development both prior to MDGs (i.e. 1970–2000), during MDGs (2000–2015), and iSDGs (2015–2030). The chapter discusses how these schemes from the oldest to the latest reflected the trope of development paradigm in India both before the MDGs, later through the period of MDGs, and iSDGs. The chapter also offers a critical view on the excessive and unscrupulous emphasis on these economic and social reforms, turning them into 'populist measures' and 'vote bank politics', ultimately hindering the development of the State in terms of infrastructural growth, employment, and multilateral development.

Role of Communication for Development in the Changed Context

At the outset, the author opines that there is no need to retell the whole range of discourse surrounding the role of communication and sustainable development. A mention of two most significant works on which the author relied suffices to recapitulate the earlier discourse that stands as a back up to this work: *Communication for Development and Social Change* (Ed. Jan Servaes for UNESCO, 2008) and *Communication for Development in the Third World: Theory and Practice for Empowerment* (Eds. Melokte & Steeves, 2013). For further understanding as to how these theoretical texts helped the author to adopt and relate them to the ongoing social change in India, the author relied on the works of Jan Servaes (1999) (*Communication for Development: One World, Multiple Cultures*) and Jan Servaes (2003) (*Approaches to Development Studies on Communication for Development*).

The most compelling reason for stating this at the outset is that there is no consensus among the development communication scholars as to a unified theory of communication for a sustainable development applicable to all national contexts and cultures (Servaes, 2008a, p.15; Servaes, 2016). Several issues complicated the understanding of an applicability of a single communication model or a theory to a developing context of third world economy in general and India in particular. In fact, the author is of the view that a hybridized model of communication models or theories applies to social contexts in countries like India (Murthy & Das, 2011). At the same time, the results of these models do not exactly follow the western patterns of results. There would be some deviations and limitations. Murthy and Das (2011) combined both Rogers's Diffusion Model (1962/1983) and Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory to explain how social change happens through Indian cinema. Their study also showed how, given the Indian context, the theory of diffusion of innovation in combination with Bandura's theory (2006) deviates from the Rogers's diffusion model.

At the same time, the author would like to remind the communication scholars that it was Contractor, Singhal, and Rogers (1988) who discovered that there are two sub-paradigms of communication model in Indian context. Everett Rogers was one of these team members and the leader of the team as well in this work. Many development scholars perhaps have overlooked this finding of Contractor et al. (1988) before critiquing that innovation diffusion model is simply an effects model and suffers from some limitations. But, in the research of Murthy and Das (2011), it was established that there is no problem with the theory of diffusion of innovation of Rogers's in combination with Bandura's social cognitive theory given due consideration to the two sub-paradigms model of Indian communication system.

The author so far has not come across any paper refuting the discovery of two sub-paradigm model of Contractor et al. (1988) in Indian communication system. In fact, Bandura (2006) stated that there is no single pattern of

diffusion, but specifies how different functions of modelling operate, in concert with other sources of influence, in various components of the process of diffusion (p.118). Though many eminent scholars of development communication and social change do not take much cognizance of cinema/film as an agent of change which can influence the behaviour of the masses, Murthy and Das's work, which appeared first in 2011 in *Asian Cinema*, reappeared in the News Letter of *Communication Initiative* on March 8, 2018, published under the editorship of Warren Freek, an eminent development communication scholar (https://www.comminit.com/global/content/social-change-through-diffusion-innovation-indian-popular-cinema-analytical-study-lage-r).

While Melokte and Steeves (2013, p. 46) are of the view that Rogers's innovation diffusion model is linear and hierarchical like Laswell's model of effects, and may not explain the complexity involved in the diffusion of messages, they argued that Kotler's social marketing replaces its weaknesses. At the same time, Servaes (2008, 2016) offered equal emphasis on innovation diffusions (one of the top-down paradigms mostly related to media effects) as well as the participatory approach (2008, pp. 16–17). At the same time, he argues in favour of more policy research including institutional analysis of developing agency coordination. Servaes (2008a, b; 2016) opines, therefore, that 'today almost nobody would dare to make the optimistic claims of the early years any longer'. He agrees that 'either implicitly or otherwise, the so-called dominant modernization paradigm still continues to influence the policy and planning-making discourse of major actors in the field of communication for development, both at theoretical and applied levels'.

Against the backdrop, the author intends to take an application approach, than a fundamental research, to the development communication in keeping with the Servaes's (2008a, b; 2016) views expressed above. The author also intends to analyse and relate the ongoing developmental projects and schemes, which are also dearly called in Indian journalistic and political parlance as 'populist schemes' meant to garner votes during elections or convert different sections of society into 'vote banks'. Whatever may be the interpretation of these measures by the general public, the fact is that both the State and Central governments in India implement these schemes in keeping with MDGs (2000–2015) and 17 iSDGs (2015–2030). In the following the author intends to explain the various communication models and networks the governments tend to apply as strategies to give an effective publicity and campaign to their newly announced schemes.

Digital Communication Strategies

Today applying through online or by calling in the information through a toll free number for various State and Central schemes has become a common phenomenon in India (Murthy, 2015). It is the single largest mode of communication for enhancing one's own awareness levels. For each sector of economic and social development that includes medical, health, agriculture, marketing, and insurance, both the State and Central Governments have brought in different

toll free numbers (Murthy, 2015). Similarly every service sector, be it private and government, has its own toll free number. *Mee Seva* (in your service—a State government initiative), Internet Kiosks, e-learning through computers at rural NGO centres (Murthy, 2008), Internet penetration, cable television, Direct To Home (DTH), YouTube, *Facebook*, *Twitter*, and so on have also begun to play a key role in spreading widely the development programmes across rural and semi-urban and urban settings (Murthy, 2015). Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) and websites have come in quite handy now for giving more access to the rural and urban populace through Internet and mobile facilities. Several self-help groups (SHGs), communities, women, and children associations have now learnt to use mobile, both android and other modes, to elicit information necessary for their upliftment. Mobile has transformed the marketing economy of several rural communities (Murthy, 2009). Compared to a decade ago, today India's digital amenities have multiplied epitomizing the concept of Schramm's 'magic multipliers' today.

Advertising Strategies

Second largest mode of communication for development is the advertising by the State as well as Central governments. The government advertising is the largest source of revenue for print and electronic media. Especially, the advertisements produced by the Films Division of India at the Central level and the State Ministry of Information and Public Relations are usually done by celebrities drawn from the world of film or television or theatre. While some of these are low cost using non-stardom actors/actresses, the others are with actors having a high stardom. At the Central level advertisements such as Prime Minister's pension schemes for unorganized sectors, an eminent actor Amitabh Bachchan portrayed the role of protagonist.

Traditional Strategies

Third most important way of communication of government schemes to rural and urban elite is through posters, pamphlets, and marketing agents, besides announcements through mikes on rickshaws, autos, and in cars. Either the Village *Panchayats*[2] or the Municipal Corporations organize these announcements through its local taxes and funds under self-governance. As for marketing, the agents of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), a government of India undertaking, marketed a number of Government of India schemes through the LIC itself.

Banks also offer ad campaigns through posters and pamphlets in their premises giving effect to various government schemes such as *Jandhan* (a savings

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[2] *Panchayat* is a smallest democratic parliament at the village level with elected members from the village population. Ward members and a President would constitute this democratic entity. It is an administrative unit of the country to where all the welfare measures and reforms must percolate.

account for a poor woman/man living below poverty line) to whose account Government of India deposits the funds as per their schemes such as *Garib Kalyan. Pradhana Mantri's Kisan Samman Yojana* (Prime Minister's Farmers' Support Plan), *Pradhana Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana* (Welfare of Poor), Farmers' crop insurance scheme, and so on provide funds from the Central Government to the *Jandhan* account of the poor. For instance in the wake of Corona pandemic in 2020, the Central Government released Rs. 500/- (equivalent to US$ 6–7) for each woman, totalling up to 198.6 million of Indian rupees. Further, Rs. 1000/- (equivalent to US $13–14) was released to each senior citizen to meet the medical expenses during this crisis. Similarly funds up to Rs. 6000/- (equivalent to US $80–81) for raising crops during the onset of monsoon session are released by the Central Government into these schemes.

These schemes have wider publicity not only in the premises of banks but also through FM Radios available on android and non-android mobiles, as well as on radios, community radios, and electronic media and advertising. Besides, the print media which now deeply penetrated in to rural India in vernacular languages (Ninan, 2007) is also offering a lot of information both in the form of news as well as advertisements. In fact the country as a whole witnessed an exponential growth in the traditional media—radio and television. There are about 902 permitted private television channels in India as on March 19, 2019. In addition to these channels, there are cable television channels at regional level in each federal State. Adding up all these, there are totally 1200 television channels in India working 24x7. There are about 369 private radio stations in more than 101 cities in India. The Government-driven All India Radio has more than 450 FM stations covering 52% population of India. There are about 180 community radio stations in India as of now (Murthy, 2010).

India produces the world's highest number of films approximately 1900–2000 a year. Most of these films deal with social issues such as gender, unemployment, psychological complexities of youth, drug addiction, criminal tendencies, OCDs (obsessive compulsive disorders), and so on. In addition there are short films also that attack on the superstitions, occultism, and bigotry.

Manual Strategies

At manual level, the communication flows happen through different hierarchies in India at the central level, and in the federal State of Andhra Pradesh at the regional level. Beginning with the office of the District Collector and Magistrate, the communication flows go downward top to bottom and reach the *Gram Seviks* (Village Assistants), revenue assistants, *Sarpanchs* (Village Secretariat Heads/Presidents), village ward members, *Anganwadis* (village child welfare and communication and service centre), para medical and para sanitation staff, and so on through Regional Development Officers, *Mandal*[3]

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[3] *Mandal* is next democratic parliament comprising several village *panchayats*. It is a penultimate unit of country's democratic fabric and acts as a transitory platform to pass on the communication of welfare measures to villages.

Development Officers, Block Development Officers, and so on. They in turn conduct meetings with the people through their peer groups leaders, community heads, and women representatives and inform the people about the newly introduced programmes from the government's side, be them from the State of Andhra Pradesh or from the Central Government.

Hybrid Strategies

Thus, due to both the network communications as well as human communication strategies through interpersonal communication flows, development processes spread among the people. With their participation alone the target levels for each specified period are attained. At its heart, the development—if it is to be sustainable—must be a process that allows people to be their own agents of change to act individually and collectively, using their own ingenuity and accessing ideas, practices, and knowledge in the search for ways to fulfil their potential. Melokte and Steeves (2013) viewed that 'communication and information are persuasive tools that can assist in the modernization process' (p. 38). They subscribed to Kotler's social marketing and described the marketing and selling of communication and information as persuasive marketing strategy under social marketing umbrella (p. 39).

Challenges

Servaes and Lie (2014) also outlined the main challenges for the field of communication for development: (a) The differences between good governance and good government and the issues of transparency and accountability; (b) the complexity of the participatory concept; (c) participation taking place at different levels; (d) the reinforcement of independent and pluralistic media; (e) not making full use of potential radio; (f) enabling policy and resources; (g) implementing a legal and supportive framework favouring the right to free expression and the emergence of free and pluralistic information systems; (h) building alliances; and (i) new global partnerships are necessary with the media, development agencies, universities, and governments.

Real Freedoms

Eminent economist and Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen described the free access to communication as 'real freedoms' (Nussbaum & Sen, 1993). Sen viewed the 'real freedom' as 'the capacity for people to participate in a diverse range of decisions that affect them and to enjoy specific "functional" aspects that constitutes a healthy life'. Concentrating more resources on fostering better communication and information processes among people—and between people and governments—will increase the power and ability of individuals to take a meaningful part in debates and decision making that are relevant to their lives (Nussbaum & Sen, 1993).

Thus, the development communication refers to the use of communication to facilitate social development (Quebral, 1972–73). It engages all the relevant stakeholders and government officials, establishes conducive environments, assesses the risks and opportunities, and facilitates exchange of information and communication to generate a positive change which constitutes 'sustainable development'. Quebral expanded the definition of communication development to a scientific realm by saying that 'it is the art of science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of economy of a country and its masses from poverty to dynamic state of economic potential' (Quebral, 2012). In short, information and communication processes are fundamental to sustainable development and lie at the heart of change (At the Heart of Change: The Role of Communication in Sustainable Development., 2007, p.7, Melokte & Steeves, 2013).
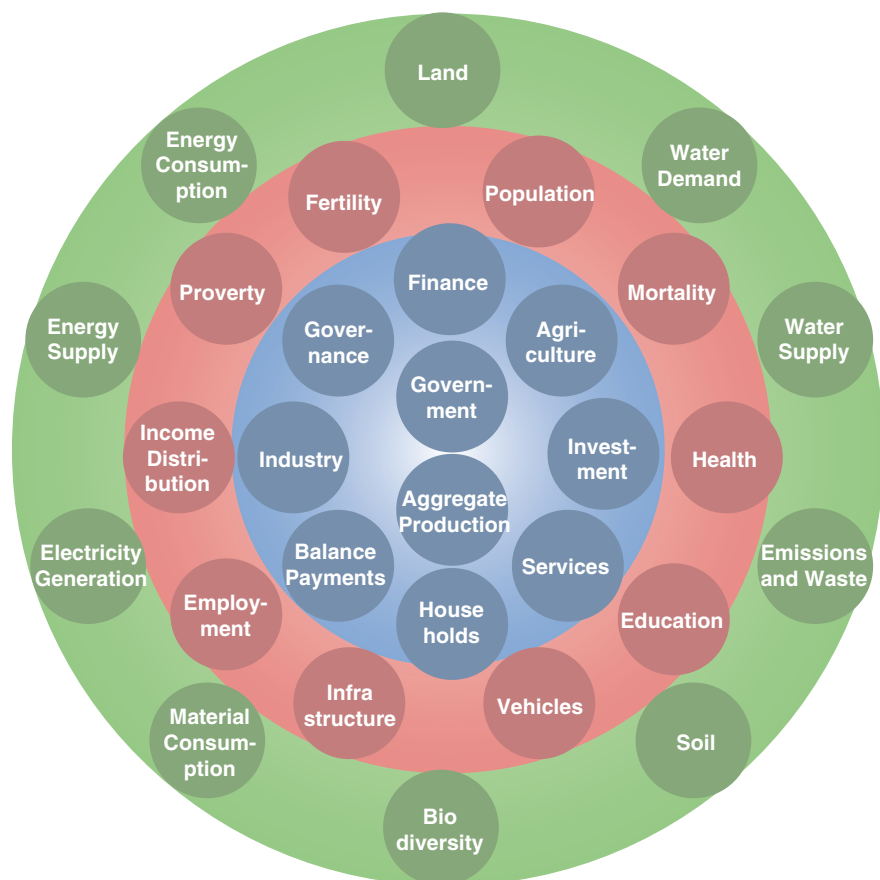
METHODOLOGY

The present study is primarily intended to qualitatively examine the genesis, growth, and development of various welfare measures rolled out by the successive governments of India at central level, and of federal State of Andhra Pradesh since 1970 at regional level (i.e. prior to the launch of MDGs in 2000) for poverty reduction, gender development, gender parity, and empowerment in India. It also intends to identify the policy initiatives that acted as accelerating agents or best drivers for implementation of best practices in the wake of liberalization, privatization, and globalization.

As a study covering entire country is beyond the scope of this pilot analysis, it is desired to study these indicators of different targets of MDGs and iSDGs through selected schemes of Central Government as well as the State Government of Andhra Pradesh as case studies. Case study method is one of the common methods in qualitative research (Lindlof & Taylor, 2010). For the purpose of analysis the author uses the method of hermeneutics which allows the research to analyse the government of Andhra Pradesh and *NITI Ayog* reports (SDG India Index-Baseline Report, 2018), online sources, scholarly articles, and so on to document the evidence in support of the hypotheses given in the statement of the problem.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study problematizes the role of any single theory or paradigm of communication in sustainable development of India. The study assumes that different paradigms of communication are operational in dealing with the issues of sustainable development at different points of time and place in India. The cultural diversities, literacy levels, and traditions play a key role in such matters. The study further argues that hybridized communication paradigms or theories

Fig. 12.1 The iSDGs discussed in the chapter show the linkages between the various goals as shown here. Overview of the iSDG subsectors. The *outer green* field includes the environment subsectors, the *middle red* field the society subsectors, and the *inner green* field the economy and governance subsectors. Source: Millennium Institute (2016)

better help explain execution of a developmental programme or scheme but need not follow the same pattern of results as in the West. It further assumes that though India and the State of Andhra Pradesh have been implementing the goals and targets of MDGs (during 2000–2015) and later the 17 iSDGs (during 2015–2019), the manner they were/are implemented in India has become highly controversial giving rise to several questions in terms of economic sustainability of the State's as well as nation's economy and growth, especially in the sectors of infrastructure, expansion of irrigation projects, and generation of employment (Fig. 12.1) (Table 12.1).

Table 12.1 A comparative chart of Millennium Development Goals and iSDGs

Millennium Development Goals 2000–2015	iSDGs 2015–2030
The eight Millennium Development Goals are: • to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; • to achieve universal primary education; • to promote gender equality and empower women; • to reduce child mortality; • to improve maternal health; • to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; • to ensure environmental sustainability; and • to develop a global partnership for development.	• Eliminate poverty • Erase hunger • Establish good health and well-being • Provide quality education • Enforce gender equality • Improve clean water and sanitation • Grow affordable and clean energy • Create decent work and economic growth • Increase industry, innovation, and infrastructure • Reduce inequality • Mobilize sustainable cities and communities • Influence responsible consumption and production • Organize climate action • Develop life below water • Advance life on land • Guarantee peace, justice, and strong institutions • Build partnerships for the goals

The Making of a 'Welfare State' Through Communication and Sustainable Development

The concept of 'welfare state' is to 'protect and promote the economic and social well being of its citizens'. The term 'protection' connotes provision of social infrastructure such as health care and prevention of discrimination on the basis of caste, colour and creed, and so on. The term 'promotion' connotes the allotment of state resources through 'redistribution of income gained from taxes for the education, vocation and employment of the depraved, deprived and under privileged/challenged sections of society'. The 'redistribution' of state resources implies offering subsidies, providing ration and free education, and creating avenues for loans at low interests. Thus, the concept of 'welfare state' connotes 'mixed economic' structure of the state as well. In the subsequent parts of this chapter, the author shows how these are being put in place both by the State of Andhra Pradesh and by the Central Government.

The development of a society is also measured in terms of its (society's) ability to offer an 'empowerment'. Melokte and Steeves (2013) defined development in terms of 'empowerment'. Lerner (1958) and Rogers (1962) have developed different paradigms of modernization and defined what they considered as 'development'. Critical perspectives of modernization theories that

were developed in the West were expected to blindly give the same results in the East. But, several communication scholars refuted such a blind application of the western development theories to the East (Servaes, 2008, Servaes, 1986; Melokte & Steeves, 2013. p. 34). In fact this has become a 'game changer' or a 'cliff hanger' in the theory of modernization and sustainable development. It has thus become a crucial and critical part of defining the 'development/ empowerment' that is more pertinent to the both sides of the hemispheres. The liberation paradigm is the third paradigm of 'development/empowerment' which originated from the Brazilian Educator Paulo Freire, 1970. It is among the most well-known proponents of development as liberation, the basis of which is liberation theology. It prioritizes personal and communal liberation from oppression, as the key to empowerment and self-reliance that is the goal for development (2013, p.34). Eminent scholars from the West such as Servaes (1986), and Haynes, Palermo, and Reidlinger (2016) advocate this model of development communication.

The term 'welfare state' is based on the principles of equality of opportunity, equitable distribution of wealth, and making the public accountable for those who are unable to avail themselves of the minimal provisions for a good life. According to T.H. Marshall (1950), an eminent sociologist, the 'welfare state' is a distinctive combination of democracy, welfare, and capitalism.

Though there are several models of 'welfare state', in addition to what were mentioned in the foregoing, the most commonly and lately referred one is the Nordic model. It relates to the steps taken by the Nordic countries (Iceland, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway) for the welfare of its citizens (such as old age pensions, transfer of money for meeting domestic expenses, etc.). However, the most widely critiqued, yet used models are based on the pioneering work of Esping-Andersen's (1985, 1990, & 1999) three types of models of welfare state.

As these models are not rigidly followed anywhere, the governments all over the world have shown ample flexibility and re-combinations among these models; however, one that is mostly favoured by the first world countries is the 'liberal' model to which the US economic model also subscribes. India is no exception to this. Though Esping-Andersen's (1990, 1999) model covered communist model, strangely, they seemed to have no knowledge of Gandhian economy model or Nehru's Socialist Model (Misra, 1995) of second largest populous economy in the world. There might be another reason, even if they had known it to ignore, for they were interested more in classifying and studying only highly industrialized first or second world economies. Apparently their interests thus seemed to be stuck there.

The author's contention here is that whatever schemes have been hammered out for the economic upliftment, sustainable development and modernization of Indian society are in compliance with India's commitment to MDGs and 17 iSDGs, signed in 2000 as well as in 2015. However, most of the political leaders and heads of various political parties do not openly admit this. They pretend

to show these welfare schemes as their own brainchildren masking the compulsions of MDGs and iSDGs (see NITI Ayog Report, 2018 to ascertain whether these schemes were reflected under the compliance report submitted to the UN body). It is against the backdrop the author intends to deal with the schemes that the federal State Andhra Pradesh as well as the Centre introduced prior to MDGs, during the running of the MDGs (2004–2015) and later during the last five years of iSDGs to drive home the hypotheses laid down in the statement of the problem.

It is five years past since the 17 iSDGs commenced. This transition from MDGs to iSDGs has come into force at a time when National Democratic Alliance (NDA) led by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi formed a stable government with a massive mandate at the Centre (2014–2019), while Nara Chandrababu Naidu has become the first Chief Minister of residual Andhra Pradesh (2014–2019). However, the Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has lost the power at the latest polls held in 2019 in the State of Andhra Pradesh. On the other hand, Narendra Modi once again returned to power with a thumping majority at this husting as a Prime Minister for a second term (2019–2024) (Table 12.2).

Table 12.2 Poverty in Andhra Pradesh and all India

Year	Andhra Pradesh			All India		
	Rural	Urban	Combined	Rural	Urban	Combined
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Percentage of people below poverty line						
1973–1974	48.41	50.61	48.86	56.44	49.01	54.88
1977–1978	38.11	42.55	39.31	53.07	45.24	51.32
1983	26.53	36.30	28.91	45.65	40.79	44.48
1987–1988	20.92	40.11	25.86	39.09	38.20	38.86
1993–1994	15.92	38.33	22.19	37.27	32.36	35.97
2004–2005	11.20	28.00	15.80	23.30	25.70	27.50
1993–1994[a]	48.10	35.20	44.60	50.10	31.80	45.30
2004–2005[a]	32.30	23.40	29.60	42.00	25.50	37.20
2009–2010[a]	22.80	17.70	21.10	33.80	20.90	29.80
Number of people below poverty line						*(lakh)*
1973–1974	178.21	47.48	225.69	2612.90	600.46	3213.36
1977–1978	149.13	48.41	197.54	2642.47	646.48	3288.95
1983	114.34	50.24	164.58	2519.57	709.40	3228.97
1987–1988	96.38	64.05	160.43	2318.80	751.69	3070.49
1993–1994	79.49	74.47	153.96	2440.31	763.37	3203.68
2004–2005[a]	180.00	55.00	235.10	3258.10	814.10	4072.20
2009–2010[a]	127.90	48.70	176.60	2782.10	764.70	3546.80

Source: Planning Commission, Government of India

Note: [a]As per Tendulkar Committee report

Transition of Indian Economy from Pre-MDGs to Post-MDGs

Pre-MDGs

Pigou (1962) has way back commented that always transfer or redistribution of taxes from the rich to the poor may not give the intended results immediately. He cautioned that sustained transfer for a longer period, till a generation passes out, will only help change the lives of poor demographics. He has modelled his interpretation based on the theory of marginal utility. He argued that 'if the programs launched by the government are not sustainable for the transference of purchase power from rich to poor on a long run, then both the rich and poor will at one time experience same paradoxical situation'. The contentions of Pigou (1962) appear quite pertinent even today to India if one critically examines the scenarios of indiscriminate implementation of the populist measures.

As India, the second largest populous country in the World, has adopted a policy of mixed economy since independence, it has logically followed a 'welfare state' model which is based on the 'liberal' approach (see Melokte & Steeves, 2013 for details of this approach). Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, preferred this model, obviously being educated in the UK. Thus, the initial welfare measures of the Government of India reflected in following a public sector economy, where the government has taken the whole responsibility of providing and protecting the citizens through its own administered agencies. During 1947–1970, India followed the then Soviet system of five years plans for development of infrastructure and social support. Government offered pensions to its citizens which lasted till 2004. There was no privatization then. The free market sources were least competitive with the giant government public sectors that were providing goods and services both together. However, the Government provided the ration at subsidized prices.

Some scholars argued that Nehru's ideas on secularism and economic policies evolved over his lifespan, and underscored the relevance of Nehru's vision of secular, democratic, and modern India where inequalities in wealth and status cease to exist. On the contrary, Misra (1995) was of the view that there was no serious comparative study of Gandhi and Nehruvian economic philosophies so far. According to him, the first five-year plan was modelled on the lines of Gandhian economic ideology whereas the second five-year plan completely emerged from the backdrop of Nehru's ideology of economic development. While neither of the plans offered any lasting solutions to the problems of poverty, unemployment, and economic disparities, the planners and policymakers have attempted to develop a third five-year plan by mixing both the ideologies. It was in the third five-year plan that the results have begun to appear.

Bhalla (2005) felt that the Nehruvian policies were quite irrelevant during his own times though his commitment to the development of nation cannot be questioned. It was during Nehru's time that 'license raj' came into existence in

the grand name of 'socialist' pattern of economy, where everything is controlled by the State. Nehru's understanding of Indians was also questioned by Bhalla, who felt that Nehru's ideology of economy was that of elite economy on the pattern of US economy. His plans to bridge the gap between the rural poor and urban elite were disoriented with his lopsided industrial and agricultural policy. He was of the view that poor have a right to choose the Prime Minister but have no right to choose what they want for their upliftment.

Contrasting with Nehruvian economics, late Indira Gandhi, the daughter of Nehru, who ascended to power, after a brief tenure of late Lal Bahadur Shastri, in 1970s has been the first Indian leader and the Prime Minister to bring in drivers and policy initiatives for the poverty reduction in India. It was during Indira Gandhi's time that first ever populist schemes, that may be referred to as measures towards building a 'welfare state', have come into existence in India tilting the balance of economy more towards the poor, peasants, and women. Among the important steps she had taken to usher into the 'welfare state' were nationalization of private banks, imposition of moratorium on the loans lent to farmers at high interests by the money lenders/feudalists/middlemen, and finally banning the privy purses to the erstwhile Maharajas. These steps, which had been implemented under the slogan, *'garibi hatao'* (remove poverty) had endeared her epithet *'Indiramma'* (Mother Indira) which is the pet name conferred on her by the poor people of India. She has first come up with a five-point formula for the upliftment of poor but expanded it to 20-point formula later. It was the first ever attempt of an Indian Prime Minister to directly address the issues like poverty, hunger, education, agriculture, unemployment, and health prior to the world coming to the grip of these issues through MDGs and iSDGs. That is reason why Indira Gandhi was called a visionary in the post-independent Indian politics and governance.

It was during her time as Prime Minister, India has launched the first ever Satellite Instructional Television Experiment, called as SITE (1975), that was jointly designed by the technical experts from NASA and ISRO. The experiment covered around 2400 villages of six States. The experiment has taken educational programmes to the door steps of the villages. The experiment proved highly successful and was considered as a pilot project for India's satellite programme. When Indira Gandhi was the Minister of Information and Broadcasting, she has appointed Wilbur Schramm as media advisor to the Government of India. Wilbur Schramm was thus incidentally responsible for founding the India's premium institute—Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC). It is the point of beginning of placing a communication model in the development of the State rural sector (Tables 12.3 and 12.4).

Nehru and Indira's economic reforms have taken a severe beating in the early 1990s, in the wake of collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989. It portended an impending economic blackout for India. Fortunately, the then Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, who is dearly addressed as the 'Father of Modern Economic Reforms', had gone forward with liberalization, privatization, and globalization in a big way opening flood gates for foreign investments and

Table 12.3 Employment in public and private sectors in Andhra Pradesh *(no. of persons)*

Sl. No.	Years	Public sector	Private sector	Total
1	2	3	4	5
1	March, 1966	656,003	300,738	956,741
2	March, 1970	689,464	294,929	984,393
3	March, 1980	1,106,201	296,700	1,402,901
4	March, 1990	1,368,152	362,500	1,730,652
5	March, 2000	1,503,280	568,362	2,071,642
6	March, 2001	1,489,108	586,154	2,075,262
7	March, 2002	1,462,190	588,541	2,050,731
8	March, 2003	1,475,454	625,335	2,100,789
9	March, 2004	1,443,979	567,666	2,011,645
10	March, 2005	1,395,814	646,966	2,042,780
11	March, 2006	1,374,735	626,719	2,001,454
12	March, 2007	1,393,509	659,633	2,053,142
13	March, 2008	1,365,633	725,298	2,090,931
14	March, 2009	1,357,884	724,916	2,082,800
15	March, 2010	1,350,287	751,357	2,101,644
16	March, 2011	1,277,371	782,457	2,059,828
17	March, 2012	1,276,054	751,854	2,027,908

Table 12.4 Growth of information technology (Hyderabad)

Year	Exports (Rs. crores)	No. of employees (cumulative)
1997–1998	284	8700
1998–1999	574	12,000
1999–2000	1059	25,500
2000–2001	1917	48,700
2001–2002	2907	64,000
2002–2003	3668	71,445
2003–2004	5025	85,945
2004–2005	8270	126,920
2005–2006	12,521	151,789
2006–2007	18,582	187,450
2007–2008	26,122	239,000
2008–2009	32,509	251,786
2009–2010	33,482	264,375
2010–2011	35,022	279,438
2011–2012	40,646	318,624

Source: Software Technology Parks of India, Hyderabad

allowing the entry of multinationals into Indian markets. This is inevitable as economy of any country moves in a cyclical pattern, and whatever we have begun in the 1970s with nationalization has to end with de-nationalization and disinvestment by the 1990s, exactly within two decades. India's transformation and transition from a controlled economy (license raj) to an open market

economy during the 1990s stands as an evidence to the contention of the author that the concepts of economic reforms and welfare economics do keep moving in cyclical pattern. What proved to be quite beneficial for the poor Indian peasants in the early 1970s has to give way with the new order global economic changes demanding a different pattern of economic reforms in the place of the older ones.

India has registered for the first time a significant march in communication and sustainable development during 1999–2004 under the vibrant leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee who as Prime Minister (1999–2004) has taken forward the economic reforms and liberalization, that P.V. Narasimha Rao founded, to a newer heights.

During MDGs (2000–2015)

The Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee was leading India when the MDGs have come into existence for the first time in 2000, at the turn of this millennium. During his period the several important developmental policies have come in place including laying down the necessary infrastructure (Golden Quadra Angle Road Construction under National Highways Development Project) for implementation of newly laid policies; significant among them are a revolution in telecommunication policy, airlines policy, radio waves policy, banking and insurance policy, agricultural policy, and industrial policy. For example, *Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana* (laying roads to every village in India), *Sarvasiksha Abhiyan* (Universalization of Elementary Education), and so on. Most of these schemes addressed the targets and goals formulated under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to which India became a party in 2000. These new policies have quickly come handy for multinationals as well as indigenous industrial sectors to quickly expand across the country bringing in a new wave of employment potential in India.

Vajpayee's government began to push in second-generation economic reforms to sustain the benefits of the first-generation reforms ushered in during the tenure of P.V. Narasimha Rao. The country registered a staggering growth of GDP exceeding 7% every year from 2003 to 2007. Increasing foreign direct investment, modernizing of public and industrial infrastructure, creating millions of jobs, and promoting high-tech and IT industry have improved the nation's international image. Good crop harvests and strong industrial expansion also helped the economy (Rai, 2004) (Tables 12.5, 12.6, 12.7, 12.8, 12.9, 12.10).

Around this time, the N. Chandrababu Naidu was the Chief Minister of the then combined State of Andhra Pradesh during 1995–2004. He was also the supremo of Telugu Desam Party (TDP) since the revolt of its legislators against the actor-turned Telugu Desam Party (TDP) founder Chief Minister N.T. Rama Rao in 1995. Ever since, Naidu used to work for the development of the State in multipronged manner. During his time, he has implemented several projects and schemes which earned him the epithet—a visionary and hi-tech Chief

Table 12.5   Growth of IT in tier II locations

Centre	Exports (Rs. crores)	No. of employees (cumulative)
Vizag	1200	16,000
Vijayawada	95.6	2558
Kakinada	34.67	1379
Tirupati	4.25	157

Source: Software Technology Parks of India, Hyderabad

Table 12.6   Welfare initiatives under social infrastructure. Performance in certain health parameters

Year	Institutions	Boys	Girls	Total
2008	2358	158,407	89,617	248,024
2009	2358	158,643	86,631	245,274
2010	2358	158,597	88,049	246,646
2011	2358	144,828	86,524	231,352
2012	2358	125,338	71,106	196,444

Source: Social Welfare Department

Table 12.7   Welfare initiatives under social infrastructure. Social welfare institutions

Year	IMR	MMR	Crude birth rate	Crude death rate	Expected life at birth
2001	66	195 (2001–2003)	20.8	8.1	M-64.1
2002	62		20.7	8.1	F-65.4*
2003	59		20.4	8.0	
2004	59	154 (2004–2006)	19.0	7.0	
2005	57		19.1	7.3	
2006	56		18.9	7.3	
2007	54	134 (2007–2009)	18.7	7.4	M-65.4
2008	52		18.4	7.5	F- 69.4 $
2009	49		18.3	7.6	
2010	46		17.9	7.6	
2011	43		17.5	7.5	M-66.9
					F-70.9 @

IMR= No. of Infant deaths during the year per thousand live births.

MMR= Maternal Mortality Ratio is proportion of maternal deaths during the year per 100,000 live births reported.

Crude birth rate =No. of live births during the year per 1000 population. Crude death rate=No. of deaths during the year per 1000 population.

[a]Projections for 2001–2006, $ Projections for 2006–2010 @ Projections for 2011–2015 Source: SRS Bulletins, Registrar General, India

Table 12.8 Welfare initiatives under social infrastructure. Girl child protection scheme

Year	No. of beneficiaries		Total
	Single girl	Two girls	
2005–2006	4914	33,980	38,894
2006–2007	7269	76,801	84,070
2007–2008	6682	86,211	92,893
2008–2009	4684	62,693	67,377
2009–2010	5648	64,654	70,302
2010–2011	6076	85,716	91,792
2011–2012	3648	55,686	59,334
2012–2013 (up to September 2012)	1410	14,112	15,522
Total	40,331	479,853	520,184

Source: Directorate of Women Development & Child Welfare

Table 12.9 Welfare initiatives under social infrastructure. Pensions

Scheme	Existing pensions	
	2011–2012	2012–2013
NOAP (Rs. crores/no. of pensioners)		
Allocation	316.27	**368.14**
Release	334.45	**184.07**
Expenditure	380.83	**189.12**
Pensioners	1,507,891	**1,508,163**
Indiramma pensions to disabled persons		
Allocation	476.50	**546.46**
Release	476.50	**273.23**
Expenditure	477.44	**255.27**
Pensioners	786,110	**784,097**
Indiramma pensions to old age persons and widows		
Allocation	1105.60	**1239.35**
Releases	1105.60	**619.68**
Expenditure	1202.44	**659.94**
Pensioners	4,575,946	**4,479,671**
Toddy tappers		
Allocation	24.48	**24.48**
Releases	24.48	**24.48**
Expenditure	8.29	**4.22**
Pensioners	33,878	**33,552**
NFBS		
Allocation	10.00	**29.00**
Releases	32.02	**14.50**
Expenditure	22.37	**17.61**
Families assisted	**44,739**	**35,213**

Source: SERP–Rural Development Department

Table 12.10 Welfare initiatives under social infrastructure. Status of national rural livelihoods mission

Item/sub item name	Achievement (No.)
No. of individual Swarozgaries assisted	27,717
No. of SC individual Swarozgaries assisted	18,202
No. of ST individual Swarozgaries assisted	5216
No. of disabled individual Swarozgaries assisted	250
Self-help groups Formed under NRLM	20,217
Income-generating activities provided	240,952

Executive Officer of the State. Naidu focused on rural development and poverty eradication through involving people in sustainable development processes accompanied by innovative reforms in the administration. That is the first ever sign of an Indian Chief Minister formulating schemes in keeping with the targets assigned under MDGs.

Two important projects that gathered international attention during his early years of becoming the Chief Minister of the State of Andhra Pradesh were—*Janmabhoomi* (birth place) and Clean and Green projects. Both of them involved public at the grassroots level. Naidu launched the *Janmabhoomi* (birth place) Programme in 1996. The main aim was to involve people in the reconstruction and revitalization of the society. The programme works at a micro level, identifying the problems of people through *Gram Sabha* (Village Parliament) involving public discussions by the regional officers, especially in villages, and to send project proposals to the government to work on. The core areas of concentration were community works, primary school education, drinking water, health, hygiene and hospitals, family welfare, and environmental protection through watershed and joint forest management activities.

In 1997 Naidu launched the 'Clean and Green Campaign' involving school students and teachers for plantation of trees both in the institutions and households in tandem with the government employees. A total of 46 million trees were planted across the entire state. About 3,906,835 people participated in sanitation work, with 1,438,850 persons engaged to remove garbage and 40,921,447 people participated in health awareness rallies (Wikisources). He was instrumental in hammering out programmes such as self-help groups (SHGs) in respect of water user associations, *Vanasamrakshana Samities* (Forest Protection Societies), *Rythu Mithra Groups* (Farmer-friendly groups), Chief Minister Employment Yojana (CMEY) Groups, and School Education Committees, and promoted the 'Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas' (DWCRA) where each group had 10–20 female members and chose a leader who conducted group meetings. The main purpose was to offer microfinance through government and bank linkage that would help rural women to start income-generating activities, know about their rights, and the

importance of education. His government supplied one-fifth of a million bicycles to the girls who joined the government high schools as part of women empowerment initiative. He has provided Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinders free to poor rural women for preparing their food at home instead of burning forest wood outside in 1999 under the name *Deepam* (Light).

Forming *Raithu Bazars* (Farmers' Markets), developing a vision document 2020, in which he has clearly indicated his objectives to completely eliminate poverty and hunger from the rural and urban societies, creating water harvesting zones at every house, founding Hyderabad Airports Authority, Cyberabad Development Authority, developing a Multi-Modal Transport System (MMTS), and so on were some of the hallmark welfare and developmental activities that he launched during his time. He has introduced Internet-based e-*seva* (*e-Service* Portal) to eliminate corruption at rural and urban levels. All the document-related certifications are provided at these centres at a nominal price. He has introduced schemes like mapping the State through land digitization. Due to his unwavering determination for development, he has put the State of Andhra Pradesh at the forefront of technology.

Despite all his commitment for the development of the State, both he and the Prime Minister Vajpayee lost power in the elections held in 2004. In the next decade (2004–2014), the Indian National Congress Party, headed by Sonia Gandhi as its Chairman, and Manmohan Singh as the Prime Minister, ruled the country both at the Centre and the State of Andhra Pradesh.

The Congress party has nominated Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy (popularly known as YSR) as the Chief Minister of the State of Andhra Pradesh for a term of years since 2004–2014. The populist measures the YSR has launched have harvested a rich vote bank among the weaker and poor sections of the society. A cursory glance at the list of some of the most important populist schemes which YSR has offered during his first term in office (2004–2009) as Chief Minister reveals the competitive nature of populist schemes, which are in fact meant to comply with the targets of MDGs. In fact the Congress Party always has looked at the measures taken for complying with the MDGs as 'populist measures' or 'vote bank politics'. In other words, the governments that implemented the MDGs and the World Bank initiatives did not show a neutral attitude with a spirit of national commitment to uplift the poor and deprived societies. On the other hand, they converted them in to political measures (Table 12.11).

Some of the major economic and welfare schemes implemented by the Congress Party during 2004–2014 in keeping with the specific targets of MDGs both at the centre and at the State were: (a) interest-free loans and one-fourth rupee interest for SHGs run by women/weaker sections of society; (b) women's fund credit to women cooperatives has been crucial to empower women meant to free themselves from the evil clutches of microfinancing institutions; (c) Community-Managed Sustainable Agriculture (CMSA) for rural peasant communities has been quite handy with a certain fund earmarked as revolving fund to meet immediate/emergency agricultural needs; (d)

Table 12.11   Overview of MGNREGS-AP

Item	2012–2013 (up to October 2012)	Cumulative
Total no. of job cards issued (lakh)	3.67	128
No. of works completed (lakh)	3.3	23.87
Total expenditure (Rs. crore)	3688	22,834
No. of households provided wage employment (lakh)	54.75	93.7
No. of individuals provided wage employment (lakh)	99.37	189
Person days generated (crore)	27.7	180.35
No. of households completed in 100 days (lakh)	6.5	48.8
Average no. of days employment provided per household	50.61	–
Average wage rate per day per person (Rs.)	105.85	93.37

Source: Rural Development Department

Dairy-Indira Kranthi Patham (IKP) has commenced the initiative of Profitable Dairying by Establishing Milk Procurement Centres in villages and Bulk Milk Cooling Units (BMCUs) at *mandal* level through SHGs and their federations; (e) Knitting Rural Self Help Enterprises (KRUSHE) wing under the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) has been initiated to promote entrepreneurship in farm and non-farm livelihoods among the members of rural SHG households; (f) The Community-Managed Health and Nutrition (CMH&N) intervention offers trained community members in the form of Health Activists (HA) and Community Resource Persons (CRP) to relay messages about maternal, neonatal, infant care practices to SHGs and village organizations; (g) Persons with Disabilities (PWD) are among the poorest and most vulnerable of the poor, the SERP has initiated disability interventions as pilot project in 138 project *mandals* in the State; (h) Social Security Pensions are meant to bring the disbursement of all pensions under one umbrella; (i) *Indira Jeevan Bheema Pathakam* is meant to offer group insurance for the rural landless poor through Life Insurance Corporation of India; (j) *Abhay Hastham* (Assuring Hand) which offers pension to every woman enrolled in SHG at her old age as a social security measure; (k) *Rajiv Arogya Sri* is another scheme which offers health coverage for treatment in corporate hospitals up to a limit of one-fifth of a million (US $2800). The whole expenses for identified diseases would be borne by the State. Even ambulance services 104/108 have been added to this scheme where anyone from anywhere could be carried to a nearest corporate hospital in case of emergency. (l) Fees reimbursement for the children of backward classes and economically backward classes up to postgraduation level in any chosen field/discipline.

When these schemes started rolling out in to public, almost every family in the State appeared to have been benefited by many of them or any one of them in one way or the other. This has acted as a binding substance between the

Congress Party and the people. Especially, YSR has become a god man in human form for masses of the State of Andhra Pradesh. As such it returned the party to power in 2009 elections though this time, the mandate was not as thumping as it was in 2004. Unfortunately, YSR died in a helicopter crash at a village while in the harness in 2009.

The country went to polls in 2014 both at the Central and State level. As a result, the NDA led by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has come to power at the Centre, while Naidu has become the first Chief Minister of the residual State of Andhra Pradesh. The former capital of the combined State of Andhra Pradesh—Hyderabad—has gone to the newly emerged State of Telangana and the residual State has to identify a new capital for its future building.

Heralding iSDGs (2015–2019)

There is no doubt that India has achieved significant progress, growth, and development in various sectors during the period MDGs were operational between 2000 and 2015. The abovementioned schemes of the State Government of Andhra Pradesh, during the rule of TDP (1999–2004) governance and later under the Congress governance (2004–2014), bear ample testimony to this fact. It is also fact that most of the schemes that the State government of Andhra Pradesh implemented during the last 15 years have received funding from the Central Government led by the BJP and the Congress parties. While the MDGs comprised 8 international development goals with 21 quantifiable targets, the 17 iSDGs have come as an extension of the MDGs with 169 targets.

Recently *NITI Ayog* (formerly known as Planning Commission of India) has brought out a report entitled *SDG India Index—Base line Report 2018.* The report has adequately documented the progress achieved during implementation of MDGs between 2000 and 2015 and the steps envisaged by the Central and State Governments for the implementing 17 iSDGs together with its 169 targets.

With the return of Narendra Modi as the head of the State of Government of India and N. Chandrababu Naidu as the Chief Minister of the State of Andhra Pradesh in 2014 elections, the implementation of the 17 iSDGs have once again assumed groundbreaking significance. In continuation of the welfare schemes the earlier Congress governments implemented between 2004 and 2014, Chandrababu Naidu has once again brought in several new welfare schemes in keeping with the 'vote bank' politics as well as the significance of 'populist measures' that returned him to power after a gap of a decade.

As a first step towards alleviating the farming community from the burden of debt-traps, the Chief Minister Naidu has implemented the loan waiving of farmers to the tune of US $337 billion (24,000 crores). He paid them cash straight into their bank accounts. He has constructed only 187 *Anna Canteens* (brother canteens) as against the promised 282 where people used to have a healthy and hygienic food prepared by *Akshaya Foundation* for just Rs. 5=00

(1/14 of a US$) be it a tiffin or a lunch or a dinner. In other words an individual suffering from hunger and poverty can have his/her two square meals of a day together with breakfast in the morning just for a payment of Rs. 15/- (one-fifth of a US$). He also implemented schemes like *Chandranna Pelli Kanuka* (a gift of Chandrababu on the occasion of a bride's marriage) which offers a cash equivalent to US $700 (Indian rupees 50,000=00) as a onetime gift to the parents of the bride to meet the expenses of the marriages which are performed very traditionally in Andhra Pradesh. Chandranna life insurance worth of US $7100 is created for the unorganized sector such as drivers, *rikshaw* (tri-wheeler) pullers, building construction labour, women, and men in various services where if they encounter an accidental death. The rice of high quality was provided for people living below the poverty line (BPL) as many kilogrammes as they need at ration dealer shops spread across the State at the rate of rupee per kilogramme (1/72 of the cost of a US dollar in Indian currency exchange).

As such he has implemented a galore of schemes for the benefit of the needy and deprived in the State of Andhra Pradesh. Some of his schemes were also having the share of a component of Central Government. He has adopted the scheme of *Mahatma Gandhi Grameen Rojgar Yojana* (Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Scheme) on a large scale, and has won the appreciation of the Central Government for procuring the largest sums of investment from the Central Government. During his time, the State image has gone up and it has recorded the highest growth per capita for the State.

Government of India Schemes

Swachh Bharat *(Clean India), AMRIT, Smart Cities, and the Like*

In each of the populist scheme implemented by the State Government, for instance, pensions for old people, 50% was given by the Centre and the rest was borne by the State. Similarly if financial interest-free loans are given to women, self-help groups (SHGs), or DWCRA groups, the Centre will bear 60–75% depending on the area and location of the target groups. To commence agricultural operations or its related works during onset of monsoon, the government of India would release its share of Rs. 6000/- (equivalent to US $80). This apart, there are schemes which Centre directly sponsors at its whole expense. Several insurance schemes for the farmers and unorganized sectors fall under this category. Most important one among such schemes is *Swachh Bharat* (Clean India). This is a scheme similar to the 'Clean and Green' scheme of Chandrababu Naidu, implemented during his earlier stint as Chief Minister during 1995–1999, 1999–2004, and 2014–2019.

In addition, the Government of India has launched a number of multifaceted schemes aimed at holistic development. Most important among them are *Swachh Bharat*, *Amrit*, and Smart Cities that seek to revolutionize India's urban and rural settings.
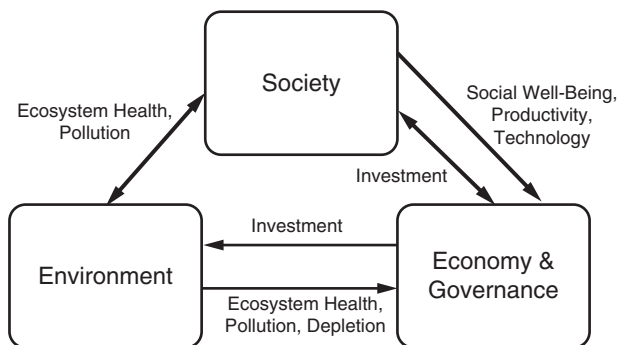
Fig. 12.2 The diagram illustrates how *Swachh Bharat* (Clean India) meets the iSDG model. Main sectors of the iSDG model. Based on Barney (2002)

Swachh Bharat is an eco-friendly, economic, energy-based, environment-friendly, health and hygiene scheme of the Government of India (see Fig. 12.2 to know how it parallels the iSDGs 2030). As soon as Narendra Modi came to power, he has implemented it to keep India clean and hygienic. The scheme is multilateral with far-reaching economic and social outcomes. The government of India invested huge money to keep the country clean at every level from village to urban centres. In the process, the railway stations, the bus stations, the government offices, the municipal and village roads, and so on have come under *Swachh Bharat* programme. Thousands of scavengers and the rural and urban poor have got employment under the scheme and today India looks far better than what it was a decade back.

One of the salient features of the scheme is to maintain good environment at every level keeping the country from village to urban to metro level free from pollution. Due to human wastes lying in the open spaces of lands, along the train tracks and at other places on the road sides, and so on, the air and water are polluted. It is leading to health problems due to contamination. Communicable diseases spread fast. It leads to government spending more money on hospitals to provide medicare for the affected and the needy. A strict implementation and monitoring has resulted in preventing people from being affected by the communicable water and air borne diseases.

Further, the government has implemented a huge plan like collecting garbage from each house. The collected garbage is segregated as wet and dry garbage which are used in processing bio-gas and power. As such the power generated by the burning of dry garbage wastes is about 4–5 MWs per day that meets the per day power requirement of Vijayawada city in Andhra Pradesh. Apart from generating employment for the poor and illiterate rural and urban men and women, it attracted a number of startup initiatives and entrepreneurs to set up small-scale power plants at each district and *mandal* headquarters to generate power that meets the local requirements. The people are mandated to rate the implementation of *Swachh Bharat* by giving their votes at the

respective collectorates or municipal corporations. The government constituted *Swachh Survekshan* Committee that would give away ballots to the participating public and elicit their views on the implementation of the scheme. Based on such rating, the Central Government will give away annual awards to the best performing cities, towns, and *mandals* across India.

The Central Government also has rolled out a scheme called *AMRIT (Affordable Medicine and Reliable Implants Treatment)* to support the poor families for the supply of subsidized inputs for treatment. Similarly, the Central Scheme *Ayushman Bharat* (Live Long India) reimburses or bears the entire medical expenditure of the people living below poverty line. The scheme is rolled out as part of National Health Policy. At the State level, the scheme is a parallel to *Arogya Sri*. Further, the Central Government has come up with a scheme called as National Smart City Mission that empowers the small towns and urban centres with all the much-needed infrastructure and digital facilities.

The government of India also implemented schemes to promote girl education—*Beti Bachao and Beti Padhao*—where the educational expenses of the girls are totally borne by the Central Government studying in the State and Central Schools, run by the Central Government funding from primary school level to University level.

It required a critical discussion whether such huge spending of money on populist measures indeed promotes India's objective to attain the iSDGs by 2030. The economic experts argue the matter in a different perspective. However, *NITI Ayog* has brought out a report in 2018 outlining the successful implementation of various schemes and measures under the goals and targets of MDGS as well as 17 iSDGs (see NITI Ayog Report, 2018 available online). That said, there is an urgent need to shift the focus from the competitive politics of populist measures versus sustainability of state's economy in countries like India.

CRITICAL DISCUSSION ON THE COMPETITIVE POLITICS OF iSDGs, SUSTAINABILITY OF STATE'S ECONOMY, AND COMMUNICATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The foregoing illustrates the fact that political parties competed with each other both at the State and Centre to retain the power or to ascend to the power in hammering out and executing various schemes and populist measures to achieve the goals and targets of the MDGs and 17 iSDGs so far. However, the manner various schemes and welfare measures have come to stay in India raises several pertinent questions, more importantly about the durability of such economic largesse among others. There are issues like what is the budget allocation? What is the source of income? How much of percentage of revenues should be spent on such welfare schemes described as populist schemes? How much of percentage of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) should be apportioned to construction of infrastructure, industries, and other projects? There

should be a scientific criteria within the framework of which the State or the Centre must implement the schemes to meet the targets of iSDGs. What is it? As of now there are no attempts to think in this direction. As a result the State's economy is turning upside down.

As Pigou (1962) discussed that transfer of purchase power from the rich man to poor at the expense of others' costs will have to be evidenced through 'reduction in the drink bill'. If that does not happen, the populist measures of the governments as a result of privatization of economy might jeopardize both the rich and the poor equally. Edwards (2007) argues that 'most academic participants in the ongoing debate over income redistribution are aware that it is not possible, ever, for government to tax one set of persons and redistribute the same amount to a set of subsidy recipients. He further contends that 'one implication of the high cost of government income redistribution comes into focus when costs are understood correctly as alternative opportunities forgone.'

Why the author is compelled to quote this is that the Government of Andhra Pradesh has found that its populist schemes (can also be called as 'charity schemes' from the perspective of the western scholars) are enormously onerous. To meet these enormous over burdening costs, the State resorted to offer cheap alcohol for the people's consumption in every corner of the State (through their own government outlets, licenced marketing outlets, bars in addition to belt shops, etc.). As such the State in its revised estimates is expecting to get whopping revenue of US $281 billion just from the sales of alcohol to the common people, whose income has been augmented by a number of populist schemes by the very State Government. Almost every household in Andhra Pradesh is receiving not less than US $200 either cash or means free from the exchequer of the State and the Central Government. Is this not a paradoxical way of implementation of welfare schemes to attain the targets of the iSDGs?

After all, this is paid from the taxes collected from the people both the rich and the poor. In the name of achieving the targets both during the MDGs and now under the iSDGs, the State revenues are redistributed instead of spending them for income generating sectors such as infrastructure, irrigation projects, and industries that generate both employment and wealth. Now the remedy has become worse than the problem. The people of the State have become addicts to this free income and economic gains under an array of various populist schemes.

Now people of the State of Andhra Pradesh no longer look for development projects and employment generating industrial units that add up to the value of State's wealth. They look for the higher sops from rival political parties competing for power. This criterion has outgrown the earlier concepts of anti-incumbency to a government in office. Now people are voting out of power a duly and well-performed government just because its 'populist schemes' and 'free subsidies' are less beneficial than the schemes of an opposition party that offers higher subsidies and benefits. If a government does not offer these many sops, it will lose power in the next elections. As such there is an unhealthy

competition between the rival political parties in promising to bring the heavens down during each term of elections.

Now expansion of agricultural projects, irrigation projects, and hydel power generation units has become secondary due to heavy spending of entire budget on the welfare schemes and populist measures. Even writing off the loans incurred by farmers over period due to crop failures or escalation of cost inputs has not led to a positive result. The government of India's recent economic survey showed that the writing off loans of farmers in fact affected the farming community more than ever. This has affected the banks' ability to lend forward the money besides affecting the borrowing power of the farmers as well. In addition, each of the populist schemes required its own management and thus calls for employment of a number of people for effective implementation. As such the cost inputs incurred on the employment of these people to deliver the schemes have become a threateningly large predator of eating away the actual funds meant for populist schemes (Edwards, 2007: 7).

Both the Government of India and the State of Andhra Pradesh must see through a window free from politics of iSDGs, and assess to whom and how long these measures have to last or end. Though, as hypothesized, the study showed a direct relationship between the communication of welfare schemes and sustainable development with the growing Indian economy, questions do stare into our face on over ambitious planning, crazy promises of welfare schemes in election manifestos, lack of scientific criteria for deciding a percentage of budget or GDP for welfare schemes, and linking the implementation of iSDGs with the politics of 'vote banks' and 'populist measures' that are likely to become decelerators of country's progress and development in the near future.

Conclusions

The chapter overviewed how the communication has played a key role in bringing about the execution of a number of welfare schemes or 'populist measures' to achieve a sustainable development in the State of Andhra Pradesh in general and in India in particular both prior to the launch of MDGs (1970–2000), during the period of MDGs (2000–2015), and later through the period of 17 iSDGs (2015–2030). The study has also highlighted the fact that a hybridized model of communication or theories works better to explain the effective relationship between communication and development in India than a single model of communication. The study also explained how many kinds of communication strategies have been at work in India in executing different welfare schemes from time to time. The State government of Andhra Pradesh has adopted a 'populist' approach in implementing a number of 'populist measures' in the guise of welfare schemes during 2000–2015 under the MDGs and later under the 17 iSDGs. The study argued that in the long course (2000–2019) of implementation of these schemes and measures, the goals and targets of MDGs or iSDGs have been turned into politics of 'vote banks' and

'populist measures'. These goals and targets have become politically competitive in India to ascend to power. In the process, the tax payers' money got distributed among the majority people of the electorate under various schemes that are actually to be afforded to a limited number of people falling below the poverty line. Such unscrupulous implementation of schemes has driven the State to a debt trap destroying the banking sector as well as State's economy.

Finally, the study not only established a direct and positive relationship between communication of welfare schemes and sustainable development at grassroots level, but raised several questions as to the future sustainability of such heavy indiscriminate and unscientific spending on 'populist measures' in order to achieve the targets of the MDGs and 17 iSDGs. It argues for a scientific criterion 'as a percentage of GDP' for such welfare measures, freeing it from the 'vote bank' politics or politics of 'populist schemes'.

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